

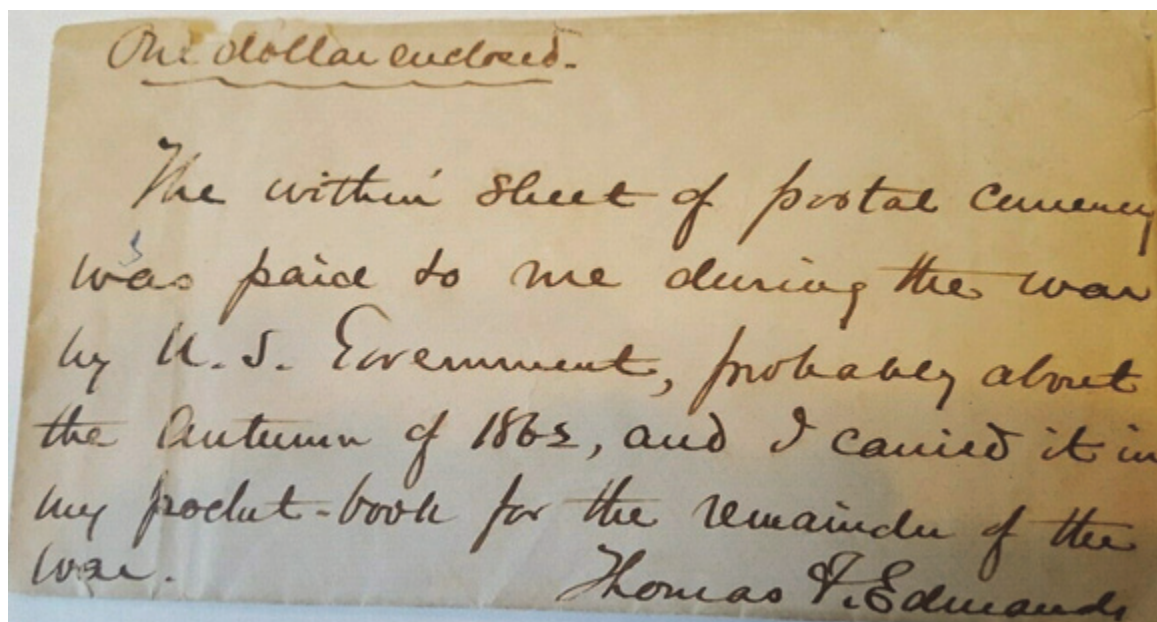
# POSTAGE CURRENCY SHEET WITH ASSOCIATED NOTE

By Rick Melamed

From a recent eBay auction is an intriguing sheet of uncut 5¢ postage notes (Fr. 1230). The common sheet itself is in rather poor condition with heavy folds, staining and torn edges...something that would not ordinarily attract much interest. But the associated envelope has a note inside stating:

**One dollar enclosed.**

"The within sheet of postal currency was paid to me during the war by U.S. Government, probably about the autumn of 1862, and I carried it in my pocket-book for the remainder of the war. Thomas F. Edmands."



We do know factually that Union army personnel were paid in postage/fractional currency. Lt. Colonel Edmands apparently took the sheet, folded it and put away in his pocket book and forgot about it. In 1862, it must've seemed odd not to be paid in gold or silver. But being that coins were scarce, he was paid in sheets of postage currency. I'm postulating that after the war, Edmands sorting through his belongings, stumbled across the folded sheet of postage currency and wrote the note; memorializing how and when he was paid. It's a quite fortuitous that the note and the sheet remain together.

Thomas F. Edmands Biography

From the New England Historic Genealogical Society is the following biography of Edmands:

Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Franklin Edmands, of Boston, a life member of this society, since 1890, was born on Court Street, in Boston, December 5, 1840, and died in Boston, August 30, 1906, at 19. Brimmer Street.

During a great part of his life he was connected with the State militia, and he won distinction in the Civil War. He was, for 33 years, commander of the First Corps of Cadets, and his funeral, with impressive military honors, was held at Trinity Church. He had membership in many military, civic, social, and other organizations, and was prominently known.

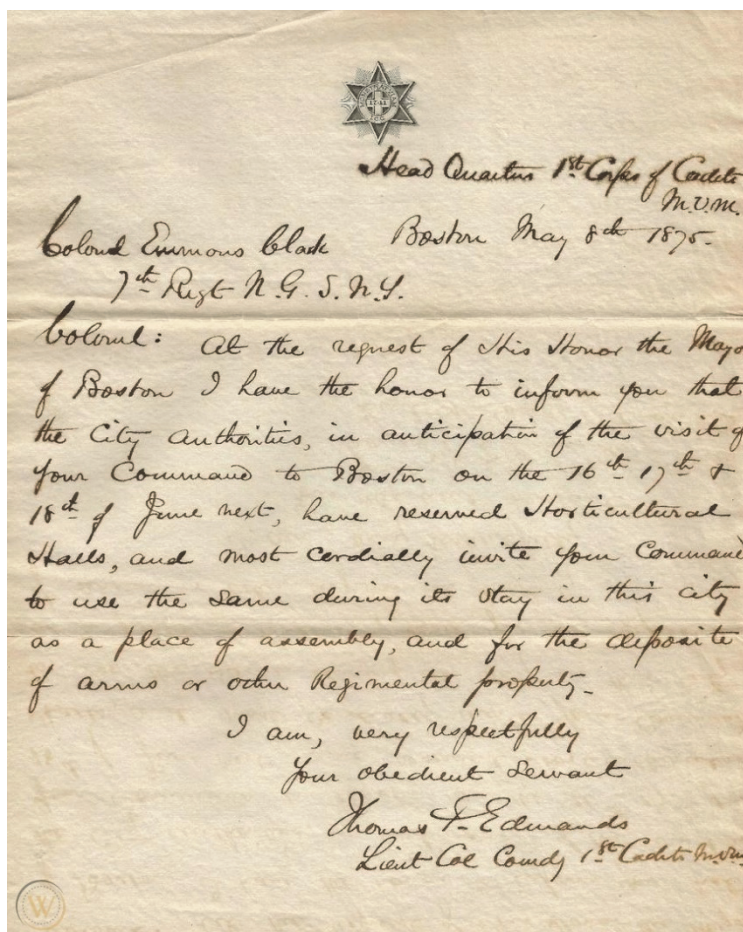
During the Civil War he was connected with the 24<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment of Infantry successfully as a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant, a 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant, and adjutant, a captain, a major, and a lieutenant colonel...between the years 1861-1866, and was mustered out as a major, in the latter years, after a service of four years and four months. He was also brevetted lieutenant colonel and colonel of the United States Volunteers, for "gallant and meritorious conduct throughout the war."

In 1861 he began his war service as a member of Company B, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion (New England Guards), He was adjutant of the first corps in 1873, and also lieutenant colonel in that year; was discharged and re-elected in 1876; and his commission was vacated in 1862, and was re-elected in 1882.

Owing to ill health, Colonel Edmands tendered his resignation as a commander of the Cadet Corps during the month previous to his death. This was accepted with regrets, and another was elected to fill his position. He, however, remained on of the veterans of the Corps.

Colonel Edmands was a descendant, in the 8<sup>th</sup> generation, of Walter Edmands who, with a wife Dorothy, came from England and settled in Concord, Massachusetts, in 1639.

On Nov. 6, 1878, he was married to Kate Barnes Horton, daughter of Henry K. Horton of Boston. They had two children, Thomas, who died the day following his birth, and Horton, who with his widow (Kate) survived.



Edmands was a prolific writer and several of his letters survived including this one from May 8, 1875. Note how the signature associated with the postage currency sheet and the letter are an exact match...proving conclusively that we have identified the correct person.

(from the letter to the left)



We are also fortunate to have located several photos of Edmands, all in his military uniform. The parlor photograph is a strong image but the tin types are a bit rough and the inscription difficult to discern. But having survived is miracle enough.



I inquired with the seller how they came into possession of the sheet and was told it was part of a large box of Civil War items purchased at auction. True enough, because these items trace to a Barnaby's auction (a notable auction house specializing in antiques) from February 28, 2020, which had a large group of items and ephemera belonging to Edmands.

Special thanks to the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Barneby's Auction House and to Angela Tillapaug, Library Assistant Massachusetts Historical Society.